

UNCLASSIFIED
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

A64

RELEASED IN FULL

PAGE 01 CARACA 01412 01 OF 03 102259Z
ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-15	AID-01	AMAD-01	CIAE-00	C-01	DODE-00
	EB-01	HA-09	H-01	INRE-00	INR-01	IO-19	LAB-04
	L-03	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	PA-01
	PM-01	PRS-01	P-01	RP-10	SIL-01	SNP-01	SP-01
	SR-01	SS-01	STR-20	TRSE-00	T-01	FMP-01	/101W
-----0D80C0 102300Z /38							

O 102259Z FEB 92 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8233
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7719

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 03 CARACAS 01412

USIA FOR P/M, P/G, P/PFL, P/PG, P/GN, B/VOA/L, AR (RSMITH)

STATE FOR ARA/P, ARA/AND

E.O. 12346" N/A
TAGS: PHUM, PGOV, VE
SUBJECT: CENSORSHIP OF ELECTRONIC AND PRINT MEDIA IN
- THE AFTERMATH OF THE FEBRUARY 4 COUP ATTEMPT;
MEDIA AND GOV REACH NEW AGREEMENT FEB 10

1. THIS IS A JOINT STATE/USIS MESSAGE.
2. SUMMARY: WITH THE SUSPENSION OF SEVERAL
CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES, INCLUDING FREEDOM OF THE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CARACA 01412 01 OF 03 102259Z
PRESS AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH, IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE
FEB 4 ATTEMPTED COUP, LOCAL MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS HAVE
COMPLAINED OF THE IMPOSITION OF CENSORSHIP MEASURES.
MAGAZINES LIKE ZETA AND ELITE WERE SEIZED, AND
MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN SCREENING
ARTICLES AT VARIOUS PRESS OFFICES. SECURITY OFFICERS
ALSO IMPEDED THE DISTRIBUTION OF EL DIARIO DE CARACAS
ISSUE OF SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, WHILE ON FEBRUARY 10,
AS OF 1500 HOURS, EL NACIONAL HAS NOT MADE AN
APPEARANCE; UNCONFIRMED REPORTS CLAIM THAT 60 SOLDIERS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J OLSON
DATE/CASE ID: 02 AUG 2006 200503206

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

OCCUPIED IT'S OFFICES. FINALLY, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WAS TO HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED ON THE MORNING T.V. SHOW ENTITLED: "BUENOS DIAS", HOSTED BY SOFIA INBER, BUT THE PROGRAM WAS INEXPLICABLY CANCELLED. LATE FEBRUARY 10, THE GOV AND MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES CAME TO AN UNDERSTANDING THAT ALLOWED THE GOV TO WITHDRAW ITS PERSONNEL FROM MEDIA OFFICES, ALTHOUGH A COMMITMENT TO SELF-CENSORSHIP WAS APPARENTLY PART OF THE DEAL. END SUMMARY.

3. ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, KIOSK OWNERS (AND THE OWNER OF ONE OTHER NEWSPAPER) INFORMED THE EMBASSY THAT MOST COPIES OF THE CENTRIST DAILY "EL DIARIO DE CARACAS" (ESTIMATED CIRCULATION 103,000) NEITHER REACHED THE NEWSSTANDS NOR WERE DELIVERED TO HOMES. ON FEBRUARY 7 "EL DIARIO" HAD ANNOUNCED THAT A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT WOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE FEBRUARY 8 ISSUE OF THE NEWSPAPER CONTAINING "THE BEST OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN DURING THE ATTEMPTED COUP."

4. ON FEBRUARY 6 THE GOV DENOUNCED A "CAMPAIGN OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CARACA 01412 01 OF 03 102259Z
DISINFORMATION AND RUMORS", AND ASKED THE MEDIA TO COOPERATE SO AS TO ENSURE SOCIAL PEACE. THE GOVERNMENT'S CENTRAL INFORMATION OFFICE (OCI) ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE WITH A "CORDIAL BUT STRONG APPEAL TO THE MEDIA, (FOR) THEIR EXEMPLARY CONDUCT (TO) CONTRIBUTE TO THE TRANQUILITY AND CONFIDENCE NEEDED BY THE CITIZENS. (IF NOT) SEVERE SANCTIONS WILL BE APPLIED, AS CONTEMPLATED WITHIN THE COUNTRY'S CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK."

5. ON SUNDAY FEBRUARY 9, EL DIARIO TOLD ITS READERS THAT AT 10.00 P.M. FRIDAY EVENING FEBRUARY 7, ITS MANAGEMENT RECEIVED A CALL FROM THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR REQUESTING EXAMINATION OF A COPY OF THE SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT SCHEDULED FOR DISTRIBUTION ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8. "THIS CALL CAME WHEN AN APPRECIABLE NUMBER OF ISSUES WERE ALREADY PRINTED, BUT SINCE (THE SUPPLEMENT) COULD BE CHANGED, WE ORDERED THE PRESSES TO HALT."

6. THE INTERIOR MINISTRY SENT ITS DIRECTOR OF POLITICS, GUEVARA ANZOLA, WHO SUGGESTED SOME CHANGES ACCEPTABLE TO EL DIARIO'S MANAGEMENT. DISTRUBUTION

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

WAS LATE, AND SOON AFTERWARDS, THE PAPER RECEIVED CALLS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES CLAIMING EL DIARIO WAS BEING CONFISCATED BY STATE SECURITY OFFICERS. THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR TOLD EL DIARIO THAT IT HAD NOT ORDERED THE INTERDICTION OF THIS ISSUE AND DID NOT KNOW WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ORDER. SECURITY FORCES ALSO ARRESTED THE NEWSPAPER'S PHOTOGRAPHER AND SEIZED THE PICTURES HE TOOK OF THEM CONFISCATING

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 CARACA 01412 01 OF 03 102259Z
COPIES OF IT.

7. ON MONDAY FEBRUARY 10, "EL DIARIO DE CARACAS" CARRIED A NUMBER OF BLANK SPACES. WHERE THE EDITORIAL WOULD HAVE BEEN ON PAGE 2, ONLY THE TITLE SURVIVED: "A SMALL DOSE." ALL OF THE PAGE 4 OP-ED SECTION WAS BLANKED OUT EXCEPT THE TITLE: "THE MIRROR OF COINCIDENCE." THE HUMOR PAGE CARRIED THE CARTOON FIGURES, BUT ALL OF THEIR DIALOGUE IN THE BALLOONS WAS MISSING, EXCEPT THE LAST LINE WHICH READS: "I UNDERSTAND, SOCRATES, AND YOU ARE RIGHT, BUT (THE SITUATION) REQUIRES (THE GOVERNMENT) TO SUSPEND (CONSTITUTIONAL) GUARANTEES NOW."

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CARACA 01412 02 OF 03 102300Z
ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-15	AID-01	AMAD-01	CIAE-00	C-01	DODE-00
	EB-01	HA-09	H-01	INRE-00	INR-01	IO-19	LAB-04
	L-03	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	PA-01

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PM-01 PRS-01 P-01 RP-10 SIL-01 SNP-01 SP-01
SR-01 SS-01 STR-20 TRSE-00 T-01 FMP-01 /101W
-----OD80DC 102301Z /38

O 102259Z FEB 92 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8234
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7720

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 03 CARACAS 01412

USIA FOR P/M, P/G, P/PFL, P/PG, P/GN, B/VOA/L, AR (RSMITH)

STATE FOR ARA/P, ARA/AND

E.O. 12346" N/A
TAGS: PHUM, PGOV, VE
SUBJECT: CENSORSHIP OF ELECTRONIC AND PRINT MEDIA IN
8. PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ HAS TOLD THE PRESS
THAT "THE SUSPENSION OF GUARANTEES WILL BE VERY
LIMITED, AND WILL NOT LAST VERY LONG. IT IS AN
INSTRUMENT ESTABLISHED BY THE CONSTITUTION FOR
SITUATIONS OF THIS NATURE." ACCION DEMOCRATICA (AD)
PRESIDENT HUMBERTO CELLI TOLD THE PRESS "THAT THE
GOVERNMENT DOES NOT PRETEND TO ABUSE THE SUSPENSION OF
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CARACA 01412 02 OF 03 102300Z
CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, AND ... THE SUSPENSION WILL NOT
LAST MORE THAN THE 10 DAYS THAT THE CONSTITUTION
FORESEES," AND, THE GOVERNMENT HAS SO FAR ACTED TO
GUARANTEE THE "STATE OF TRANQUILITY OF THE POPULATION."

9. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, RAMON ESCOVAR SALOM, TOOK
EXCEPTION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S INTERPRETATION OF HIS
STANCE ON THE ISSUE OF FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, AND
CATEGORICALLY STATED THAT "THE GOVERNMENT MUST
REINSTITUTE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE. THE MEDIA ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE
ATTEMPTED COUP D'ETAT, SINCE THEY ONLY REFLECT THE
SITUATION WHICH THE COUNTRY IS LIVING THROUGH."
ESCOVAR "CATEGORICALLY" DENIED THE ASSERTION OF THE
MINISTER OF INTERIOR THAT HIS (ESCOVAR'S) OFFICE
AGREED WITH CENSORSHIP. ESCOVAR EXPLAINED THAT HIS
OFFICE ONLY DETERMINED THE "LEGALITY" OF THE DECREE
SUSPENDING CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

10. THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATION (CNP), FRANCISCO SOLORZANO FRASO, HAS CALLED FOR THE REINSTATEMENT OF ARTICLE 66 OF THE CONSTITUTION (LIBERTY OF EXPRESSION) BECAUSE "THE COUNTRY REQUESTS AT THIS MOMENT NOT COERCION BUT OPENNESS AND CONFIDENCE." MEANWHILE, COPEI SECRETARY GENERAL EDUARDO FERNANDEZ TOLD THE PRESS "IT MUST CONTRIBUTE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL NORMALCY." THE PRESS DULY NOTED THAT, SINCE THE ATTEMPTED COUP, FERNANDEZ HAS MET WITH CAP ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CARACA 01412 02 OF 03 102300Z
11. LIBERAL, LEADING DAILY "EL NACIONAL" (ESTIMATED CIRCULATION 200,000), IN ITS FEBRUARY 9 EDITION, DEVOTED A FULL PAGE IN SECTION D-8 "INFORMATION" TO THE ISSUE OF PRESS AND TELEVISION CENSORSHIP. TITLED "(PRESIDENT PEREZ) EXPLAINED THE PRESENCE OF CENSORSHIP IN THE MEDIA," SUBHEADS READ: "WE HAVE NOT SENT OUT MILITARY CENSORS, ONLY CIVILIAN (GOVERNMENTAL) CENSORS IN CONSIDERATION OF OUR PLAN TO AVOID (SAYING OR PRINTING) THINGS THAT ARE WITHOUT FOUNDATION"; "TO A PRESS CONFERENCE HELD BY THE PRESIDENT WITH FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS IN MIRAFLORES (THE VENEZUELAN WHITE HOUSE), MAKING CLEAR THAT THE CONFERENCE WAS NOT FOR LOCAL REPORTERS, THE PRESIDENT INDICATED THAT THE MACROECONOMY OF THE COUNTRY WOULD NOT BE DAMAGED BY THE COUP"; "THE DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH TOOK PLACE DURING THE LAST YEAR WERE CAUSED MERELY BECAUSE THE STUDENTS FEARED THAT THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM WAS ABOUT TO BE PRIVATIZED."

SECOND ARTICLE, SAME PAGE IS HEADED: "THE CHIEF OF STATE (SAYS) THERE WAS A GRAVE ERROR IN SHOWING COUP LEADER COMMANDER HUGO CHAVEZ FRIAS SPEAKING ON TELEVISION."

THIRD ARTICLE, SAME PAGE: "POLICY DIRECTOR OF THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, AUGUSTO CUEVARA ANZOLA, WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE STAFF, MADE CLEAR THAT THEY WOULD HAVE A 'PERMANENT PRESENCE' AT 'EL NACIONAL,' AND THEY SUGGESTED THAT THE NEWSPAPER NOT PUBLISH AN INTERVIEW WITH THE HEAD OF THE RETIRED MILITARY OFFICER'S ORGANIZATION." AN ACCOMPANYING PHOTOGRAPH SHOWS

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 CARACA 01412 02 OF 03 102300Z
MEMBERS OF THE POLICE IN THE NEWSPAPER OFFICE.

12. CONSERVATIVE, LEADING DAILY "EL UNIVERSAL'S"
(ESTIMATED CIRCULATION 195,000) STORY ABOUT THE PRESS
CONFERENCE THAT PRESIDENT PEREZ HELD WITH THE FOREIGN
CORRESPONDENTS IS HEADED: "THERE WERE PROBLEMS IN THE
SECURITY SYSTEM (OF THE COUNTRY)", SUBHEADS: "THE
SUSPENSION OF CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES WILL BE VERY
LIMITED AND FOR JUST A SHORT TIME."

13. MASS CIRCULATION "EL NEUVO PAIS" ON MONDAY,
FEBRUARY 10, DISPLAYED LARGE BLANK WHITE SPACES WHERE
CENSORS HAD AXED BOTH PHOTOGRAPHS AND WHOLE SECTIONS
OF ARTICLES. SIXTEEN PAGES OF THE 30-PAGE EDITION
WERE SUBMITTED TO CENSORSHIP.

14. TELEVISION COVERAGE OF THE COUP ATTEMPT AFTERMATH
AVOIDED VISUALS OF THE COUP LEADER, BUT GOVERNMENT -
PRODUCED SPOTS FROM THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION (OCI) ARE BEING SCREENED AT INTERVALS ON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CARACA 01412 03 OF 03 102302Z
ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-15	AID-01	AMAD-01	CIAE-00	C-01	DODE-00
	EB-01	HA-09	H-01	INRE-00	INR-01	IO-19	LAB-04
	L-03	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	PA-01
	PM-01	PRS-01	P-01	RP-10	SIL-01	SNP-01	SP-01

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

SR-01 SS-01 STR-20 TRSE-00 T-01 FMP-01 /101W
-----0D8102 102302Z /38

O 102259Z FEB 92 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8235
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7721

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 03 OF 03 CARACAS 01412

USIA FOR P/M, P/G, P/PFL, P/PG, P/GN, B/VOA/L, AR (RSMITH)

STATE FOR ARA/P, ARA/AND

E.O. 12346" N/A
TAGS: PHUM, PGOV, VE
SUBJECT: CENSORSHIP OF ELECTRONIC AND PRINT MEDIA IN
CHANNELS 4, 5, AND 6. THE CLIP SHOWS THE TANK ATTACK
UPON THE VENEZUELAN WHITE HOUSE, MIRAFLORES, A DEAD
SOLDIER OR TWO, THE PRESIDENT'S WIFE WITH CHILDREN AND
GRANDCHILDREN (THERE WAS A MORTAR ATTACK ON LA CASONA,
THE PRESIDENTIAL RESIDENCE WHERE THEY LIVE), A SHOT OF
MARCHING (LOYAL) SOLDIERS, AND A FEW SHOTS OF
PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ SPEAKING DIRECTLY INTO
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CARACA 01412 03 OF 03 102302Z
THE CAMERA ABOUT HOW DEMOCRACY PERSEVERED OVER THE
FORCES OF FASCISM.

15. ON MONDAY FEBRUARY 10, EL NACIONAL DID NOT APPEAR
AT NEWSSTANDS. UNCONFIRMED REPORTS CLAIM THAT 60
SOLDIERS OCCUPIED THE BUILDING. POPULAR CHANNEL 4
TALK SHOW "BUENAS DIAS" HOSTED BY SOFIA INBER WAS
CANCELLED THIS MORNING. THE STATION ANNOUNCED THAT
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WAS TO BE INTERVIEWED. FINALLY,
ONE RADIO STATION THAT HAD PLAYED A SPANISH FEED FROM
VOA ON VENEZUELAN DISCONTENT ON THE STATE OF ECONOMY
RECEIVED A WARNING CALL FROM THE GOVERNMENT. OTHER
STATIONS WHICH HAD ALSO RECEIVED THE VOA FEED CHOSE
NOT TO AIR IT.

16. LATE ON FEBRUARY 10, THE GOV AND MEDIA OWNERS MET
AT MIRAFLORES PALACE TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION. IT IS
OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE GOVERNMENT AGREED TO
WITHDRAW CENSORS FROM THE MEDIA ENTITIES EFFECTIVE

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

IMMEDIATELY. IN RETURN, THE MEDIA OWNERS AGREED TO
EXERCISE "RESPONSIBILITY" IN SELECTION OF MATERIAL
UTILIZED. EL NACIONAL WILL APPEAR ON FEBRUARY 11.

SKOL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNNN

UNCLASSIFIED